

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

CINCLANT

USCINCEUR

USDOCOSOUTH

USLOSACLANT

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 3322

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE 1975,IMPASSE ON ALLIANCE COOP-
ERATION SECTION

REF: A. USNATO 3261

B. USNATO 3147

C. USNATO 2301

SUMMARY. ALLIANCE COOPERATION SECTION OF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE
1975 IS UNRESOLVED DUE TO IMPASSE OVER NETHERLANDS PROPOSAL
ON RATIONALIZATION/STANDARDIZATION. DPC MAY MEET ON THIS
ISSUE WEEK OF JUNE 23. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON GUIDANCE.
END SUMMARY.

1. AS REPORTED REF A, CIRCULATION OF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE
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1975 HAS BEEN DELAYED DUE TO CONTINUED LACK OF ALLIED AGREEMENT
ON INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH ON ALLIANCE COOPERATION (PARA 40).
LATEST DEVELOPMENT, ACCORDING TO IS (BRABAND), IS THAT NETHERLANDS
(MOD VREDELING) IS WILLING TO ACCEPT "COULD" IN LAST SENTENCE

(STILL IN BRACKETS), WHICH WOULD THEN READ: "THESE POSSIBILITIES HAVE TO BE PURSUED WITH INCREASED VIGOUR, AS INSUFFICIENT PROGRESS IN THESE FIELDS COULD MAKE IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE TO MAINTAIN VALID DEFENSES WITHIN THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE." (REF B). THIS AGREEMENT IS PROVISIONAL ON ACCEPTANCE BY ALLIES OF ACCOMPANYING FOOTNOTE WITH WORDS TO THE EFFECT THAT

"THE NETHERLANDS MINISTER WOULD HAVE PREFERRED A MORE STRINGENT FORMULATION OF THIS RISK." ALTERNATIVELY, NETHERLANDS WOULD ACCEPT "COULD" FORMULATION IN PARA 40 IF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE COVER NOTE ALLUDED TO COMPROMISE CHARACTER OF GUIDANCE AND INCLUDED STATEMENT REGARDING VREDELING'S POSITION ON PARA 40, SIMILAR TO ABOVE. IS HAS POLLED DELEGATIONS AND MET WITH STRONG RESISTANCE, ON TWO RELATED GROUNDS: A) CONCERN THAT NETHERLANDS MAY BE TRYING TO BUILD IN AN "ESCAPE CLAUSE" AS AN EXCUSE TO REDUCE FORCES IF RATIONALIZATION/ SPECIALIZATION DO NOT PAN OUT TO THEIR SATISFACTION; AND B) DESIRE TO AVOID NATIONAL FOOTNOTE (WITH PRECEDENT-SETTING EFFECT) IN MAJOR NATO POLICY DOCUMENT. BELGIANS, WHO ACCEPTED THE "COULD" FORMULATION (AS OPPOSED TO NO STATEMENT AT ALL) ONLY WITH GREAT RELUCTANCE, ARE PARTICULARLY ADAMANT. WASHINGTON WILL ALSO RECALL THAT, AT DPC MINISTERIAL, FRG MOD LEBER WAS OPPOSED TO IDEA OF DIRECTLY LINKING PROGRESS IN RATION-ALIZATION AND STANDARDIZATION WITH MEASURE OF ALLIED DEFENSIVE EFFORTS.

2. SINCE THIS ISSUE FIRST SURFACED AT APRIL 25 DRC (REPORTED REF C), USNATO HAS ADOPTED RELATIVELY LOW PROFILE, BUT JOINING UNANIMOUS OPPOSITION TO DUTCH FOOTNOTE APPROACH. WE (AND UKNATO) HAVE TRIED WITHOUT SUCCESS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO SELL THE DUTCH ON A POSITIVE FORMULATION: I.E., ONE THAT SAYS A STRONG CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE IS POSSIBLE PROVIDED WE EMPHASIZE COOPERATION, RATHER THAN SAYING THAT, GIVEN RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS, SUCH A DEFENSE IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT EMPHASIS ON COOPERATION. NETHERLANDS UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THIS APPROACH HAS FUELED ALLIED SUSPICIONS OF NETHERLANDS MOTIVES.

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3. WE HAVE POINTED OUT TO IS (WHO HAVE NO DOUBT PASSED POINT ALONG TO ALLIED DRC REPS) THAT SPECIAL RECOGNITION IN MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE OF NETHERLANDS POSITION ON THIS ISSUE WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR US NOT TO PRESS FOR SIMILAR RECOGNITION OF US POSITION ON WARNING OF WAR.

4. IS IS UNABLE TO OBTAIN STAFF-LEVEL AGREEMENT TO EITHER THE NETHERLANDS POSITION OR SOME MODIFICATION TO IT (BOTH OF WHICH SEEM UNLIKELY), THEY BELIEVE DPC PERMREPS MAY HAVE TO MEET ON THIS ISSUE, PROBABLY DURING WEEK OF JUNE 23. WE RECOMMEND THAT US CONTINUE TO SUPPORT A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD ACCEPT THE "COULD" FORMULATION, BUT RESIST ANY FOOTNOTE OR OTHER SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF NETHERLANDS POSITION. ACTION

REQUESTED: WASHINGTON GUIDANCE.STREATOR

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